

# YOUTHFUL WASHINGTON LAD'S ADVENTURES IN ALASKA

Fourteen-Year-Old Harris Jones Made a Lot of Money Doing Odd Jobs in Nome, and, of Course, Staked Out a Claim Which He Expects Will Make Him as Rich as "One of Those Standard Oil Fellows."

**T**HOROUGHLY enthusiastic is Harris Jones, the fourteen-year-old son of Capt. Thomas Jones, of the Pension Office, who has just returned from a three years' stay in the gold regions of Alaska, and the lad declares that he would not remain away from Nome though offered the best-paying position under the Government in Washington.

"Nome is the place for the poor boy who has plenty of ginger in him," said young Jones, "and, with the consent of my parents, I am going back there after I take a five months' business course here. I went to Nome three years ago with my aunt, who has considerable property there. I was then eleven years old, but I soon found that, though even in knee breeches, there was an 'opening' for me to make some money, and I went at it, and I made it, too."

## The Way to Keep Warm.

"Yes, it was cold; but the weather doesn't bother a fellow much when there are large round dollars in sight. The knowledge that one is making big money has a tendency to warm him up, you know. Any old boy can make good money out there if he has the grit-up in him. There are all kinds of turns he can make, and the people in Nome spend money with a liberal hand. I can tell you why, do you know that I got a dollar a trip to carry the 'Cape Nome Nugget,' a small, twice-a-week paper, and I didn't have half a hundred subscribers to serve, either, and every copy I sold I made 12½ cents. But my, my! the money rolled in when I could get papers from Washington, New York, Chicago, Boston, or Kansas City to sell. I could just get my own price, and people would stand round and beg for them."

"Nome has its four hundred—the so-



"My dog team is one of the best in Nome."

ciety people you know—and when they would give their entertainments, dances, and dinners, that was the time I could get a 'V' for helping around. Oh, there are just lots of ways a fellow can pick up dollars, but I had a good regular position with the Pacific Cold Storage Company, and everything outside of this was 'velvet'—extra money. My boss liked me, and never refused to let me off when I had a chance to make a few dollars. Right now is the season when the moneyed men are spending their easily-earned wealth. You see, these men work like wheel horses during the spring, summer, and fall months, and when the freeze-up comes they come into Nome and let the money and nuggets fly.

"Things are not quite so lively there

now as they were before President Roosevelt closed up the gambling joints last spring. The United States marshal had a picnic for a little spell, but they were stopped—run on the sly now. Just as they do here, I guess. There were nine barrooms right in a row in Front Street, and before I left, twenty-two saloon keepers had made applications for license—\$1,500 each, and only about 2,500 population. Looks like that would keep things warm, don't it, a little bit?

## Plenty of Work for All.

"But a young fellow needn't monkey around such joints to make a good living. Not a bit of it. There are lots of other places in which he can find employment, and at good wages, too. Why, a fellow can trade with the Eskimos and make more money than he can here. These Eskimos are funny people,

but are clever and honest as the day is long. They are a great deal better people than some people would have you believe. Like the Indian, they are firm in their belief that you are only waiting a chance to 'skin' him in a trade, and the fact is, they are generally skinned good and hard. An Eskimo will trade for anything from a horseshoe nail to a steam engine. I have seen one of them exchange a pair of mukluks—untanned skin boots, beautifully made and with walrus soles—for a pocket knife, cheap pistol, and a few such articles, not worth at the most over \$1.50. These mukluks are about the only reliable footwear you can get there, and they will last for months. The mukluks, gloves, coats, and other articles of wearing apparel made by the Eski-



"This is the way I dress when the days are only moderately cold."

mos have kept many a man from freezing to death.

"Certainly I have my 'gold mine' out there. A friend of mine aided me in staking a claim two years ago and I believe it will make me a rich man one of these days, and I believe it so strong that I am not going to stay very far away from it. I'm going to nurse it, as the miners say. It is located on Dewey Creek, about six miles from the mines

of the Pioneer Company, from which was taken the largest nugget the country ever saw, weighing 132 ounces, and worth \$3,275. It was the prettiest thing I ever laid eyes on. Geese, geese, think of a solid piece of gold—the genuine, natural stuff—measuring 1½ inches in circumference, 17½ across, and 20½ long!

## Curiously Shaped Nuggets.

"Do you know it is interesting to study some of these large nuggets just

Just Home for a Visit and to Take a Short Business Course, When He Is Going Back, "You Bet." Alaska the Finest Country in the World for Young Men With "Plenty of Ginger"—Keeping Warm.

as they are taken from the ground? You can find them shaped like dogs, cats, eagles, snakes, and even like men. I have seen a perfect profile of a man's face—everything complete—as could possibly be made, and dogs, and such things are common. A Miss Smith, who lives here in Washington, had the most perfect outlines of an eagle that I ever saw taken from a mine.

"Of course you don't have 'all the comforts of home' in Nome—not by a long jump—but it's worth a great deal to a young boy to know that he is where he can stand a reasonably good chance of being classed with the Standard Oil men some day. It, to me, is a long ways better than hanging around Washington with your only hope, and that a very weak one, of being able to successfully go against the civil service and finally getting a \$300 job with a life and death struggle with all kinds of bootlicking to get a promotion. I will take my chances every time out in Alaska with the Eskimos, the ice, and the dogs.

## Chances for Real Live Boys.

"I don't want to make any boy dissatisfied with his home and put the Alaska fever into any of their heads, but I believe that if a real live boy—a boy who has not made the acquaintance of cigarettes and such like bad habits, and is willing to work—wants to get out and hustle for himself, he will not find a better place on earth than Nome or any other place in Alaska. Well, it is just this, if he gets there and doesn't get a pay-day movement on him he will either starve or freeze to death. If there is plenty of ginger in him, if he is not afraid to work, and doesn't have to take a cigarette from between his teeth to speak to a gentleman, he will succeed, even if it's only selling papers and doing odd jobs."

# TRUE STORIES DEPICTING THE CRAFTINESS OF WILD ANIMALS

**T**ELL us a story, general." The speaker was one of a group of newspaper men, and the occasion a little dinner in honor of Brig. Gen. Andrew S. Burt, U. S. A., retired, a few nights ago in one of Washington's prominent hotels.

General Burt is "one of the boys," and nothing delights him more than to have a crowd of them around him, and he is game to holding up his end of the stick when it comes to spinning a yarn. "I'll go you," was the hearty response of the genial old soldier as the boys fixed themselves in comfort, each puffing a fragrant Havana or a hastily rolled cigarette, with a mug of "hot stuff" within easy reach.

"You fellows have been talking and writing about the sagacity of domestic animals. Stories frequently appear in print about the intelligence of the horse and of the dog, but of animals in their wild state you seldom read or hear a thing. Suppose I take the craftiness of wild animals as my subject."

"All right, general, fire ahead; we may be able to make a good yarn out of your

reminders," was the hearty response from several of the fellows.

"Well, during an experience of thirty-two years on the great plains of the Far West in their wild state I made quite a study of the habits and customs of animals in their wild state, and of all the animals that live from hand to mouth Brer Rabbit seems to be especially defenseless and the most eagerly sought after. Yet it has been my experience that harmless bunny will fight on occasion and look fierce enough to scare a camel. On a ranch in Cottonwood Arroyo, just south of Pueblo, where I was once stationed, was a shepherd dog that never tired of playing with the numerous cottontails that dwelt under the cañon and in the big rock ledges thereabout. The dog was always 'it,' for he never caught any rabbits; but one evening he flushed one in a millet patch and tore across a dry creekbed after it pretty close behind, but not gaining to any encouraging extent.

## Mr. Rabbit Too Quick.

"Just as he rushed past a large cane cactus a big rabbit flashed out like a

gray streak and hit him a solid thump to the side. Its onslaught was so sudden and well timed that 'Mr. Dog' lost his footing, rolled over on the hillside with a yelp, scrambled to his feet and raced headlong for the camp with his tail between his legs. The rabbit watched him go and then hopped back under the cactus again, squatted on his haunches, 'wagged' his nose and washed his face with his paws in quiet contentment of a victory gained. After that that shepherd dog always viewed that particular spot with suspicion and it is doubtful if he ever knew what hit him.

"Sometimes rabbits delight in playing with and teasing a dog as swallows do a cat. Yet they never try the same trick on a swift fox nor do the swallows tease a weasel. I have seen a moonlight party of rabbits playing leapfrog and tag suddenly disappear in their burrows, the scent of a fox having crept down with a light breeze.

"A jackrabbit is a fool, for if you once start him up he will run past a hundred safe havens of refuge, and

moreover will gradually edge his way back to the place of beginning.

## Two Sharp Coyotes.

"On the north side of the Colorado Canyon in northern Arizona are the Buckskin Mountains. Once while riding along looking at the beautiful scenery I noticed that down below two coyotes were hunting and they started up a big jackrabbit. With a bark and a yelp the chase began. It was worth witnessing from the point of vantage I occupied and I watched it from start to finish. For the first few jumps both coyotes rushed and yapped at the top of their lungs. Then one of them fell back and lay down in the snow till he blended with the landscape. The other coyote forged on fearfully after the jackrabbit, following as closely as possible and keeping up his short barking yelp. Little by little the rabbit swerved toward the left until he had finally made the circle and came back near his starting point. As he swung in near the coyote that had stayed behind the latter jumped toward him with wild shrieks of ferocity, and for the

next hundred yards or so that rabbit broke all records in his efforts to 'ret' away. When the waiting coyote took the pursuit the one who had been chasing the 'jack' dropped down and rested. The next time the rabbit made a wider turn and took a longer time to get back, but back he did come at last, and then the program was repeated all over again. But the next time the rabbit returned to the starting point he was too exhausted to escape the rush of the rested coyote and fell a victim to his foolishness in returning to a point he had been twice warned to avoid.

## Wisdom of the Otter.

"Now compare such foolishness to the wisdom of the otter, who, seeing the footprints of man near his house, will hide out for a month before returning to that place.

"Own cousin to the rabbit in foolishness is the skunk. Confidence of his awful weapon of defense a skunk is only equalled in reckless bravery by the porcupine and both are too stupid to take any warning. Around camps where the cook cuts open canned food with a hatchet it is not an uncommon thing

to catch skunks nearby. The can top being cut in quarters by two blows from the hatchet is emptied of its contents and thrown on the waste pile. If that can happens to have held salmon it is irresistible to any skunk or 'coon that passes to the leeward of it. A little investigation locates it, a paw is tried and then a nose. The yielding top allows an entrance, but forbids withdrawal, and so hooded the prowler falls a victim to those in camp. The rabbit, skunk, porcupine, badger, and raccoon are all easily trapped and unsuspecting of danger, but when one tries the fox, wolf, and feline families he finds an entirely different proposition. A snare, a tin can, or even in the case of the 'coon, a hole bored in a fallen log, with a sharp wire nail driven slantwise will suffice to entrap the unwary ones, but it takes woodcraft to entrap the swift, coyote, wolverine, marten, otter, or wildcat.

## Robbed the Traps.

"Once, while with an old trapper, back of the Spanish peaks a pine marten robbed his traps with startling regularity. Every morning a dead branch or a

piece of brush would be found in the sprung trap, and the bait would be gone. He was finally caught by leaving dead branches handy for him to use and hiding traps near them. It is interesting to note the actions of an otter when he finds the tracks of a man near his home. He stops, his hair bristles up, and he casts a furtive look around, as if he had been caught stealing chickens. Little by little he edges away, and if he has a wife and babies sneaks off to them and hustles them out and away from the place. He knows the dangers of civilization.

"The wildcat, ounce, and mountain lion, after one experience with a trap become very wise, and correspondingly hard to entrap, but a strange thing about most animals who are wise in avoiding steel traps is that they seem to know that when a trap is sprung it is no longer dangerous and will go deliberately up and devour the bait.

"So it is with all the animals I have seen on the plains. Your horse and your dog of civilization may be mighty intelligent and smart, but those animals that are compelled to live by their wits are not far behind, if at all."

## WOOD'S TALKING CROW

**O**NE frequently hears of talking crows, and the old legend to the effect that a split tongue is all that is necessary to make one carry on lengthy conversations in the most polished English is familiar to nearly every child of ten years old. The split tongue story has long been proven a myth at the cost of absolute cruelty to many a poor crow, but many persons still believe that any crow can talk if he so desires and has an opportunity of association with loquacious specimens of the human family.

Prof. Wood, one of the taxidermists of the Smithsonian Institution, has a crow, however, that not only can talk, but which does talk. His name is "Jack" and he is as fine a specimen of the Corvus Americanus as one would wish to see; a big, black fellow, full of life and the uncanny suspiciousness for which his kind are noted, for of all the birds of the air the crow is the shyest and most sagacious. "Jack," with a companion taken from the same nest, was bought by Mr. Wood from a bird fancier in June, 1902, at which time he was about three weeks old, making him a little more than a year and a half old now. Jack's mate died, but he lived and waxed strong in voice and spirit, keeping his master up half the night during the period of his rapid growth, feeding him every hour or so. When he was big enough to take care of himself for a reasonable length of time Mr. Wood brought Jack to his workshop at the Smithsonian and settled him in a big cage. Then the fun began.

Jack had always been an unusually smart crow, learning tricks very readily. He was more than ordinarily suspicious, even for a crow, but soon learned to eat and to come to the bars at his cage whenever food was in sight. After he had been at the workshop for a while he was heard, one day during the absence of Mr. Wood, muttering to himself, "If I am assistant, working in an adjoining room, creep quietly to the door

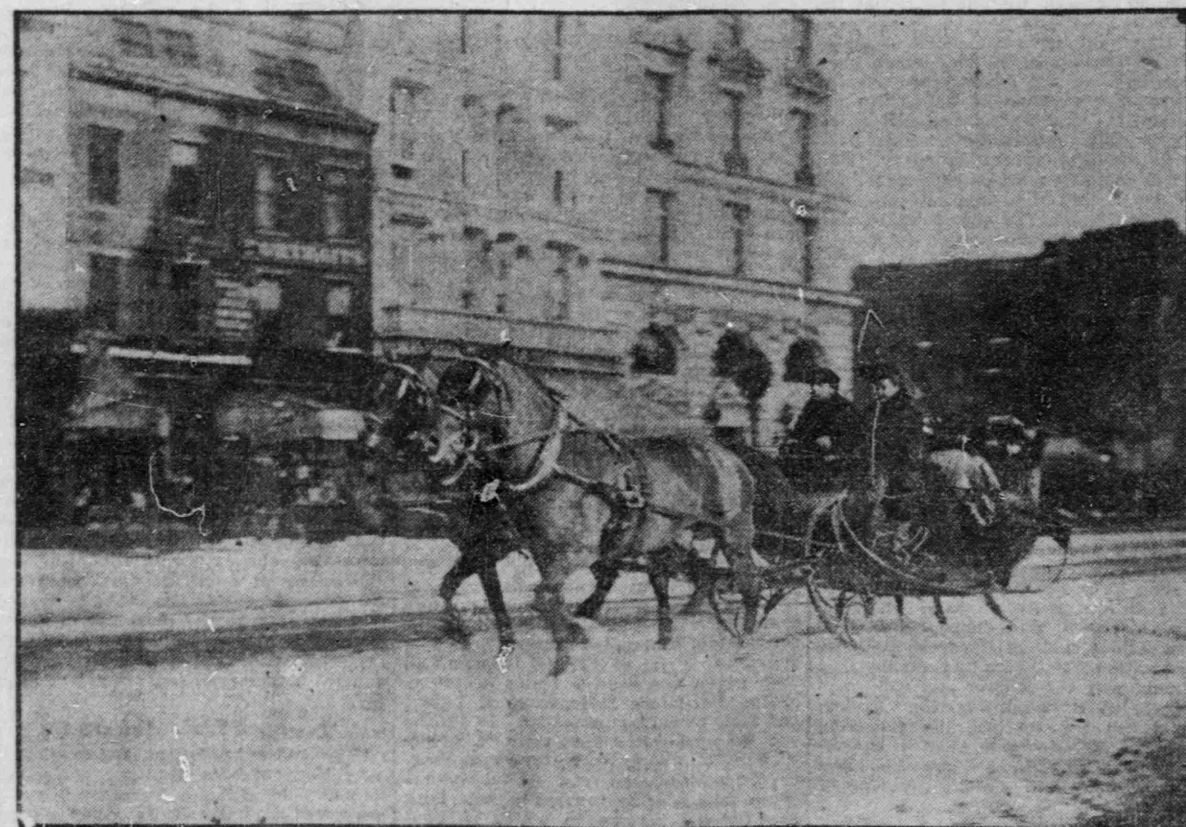
to listen. What was his surprise to hear from Jack's cage: "Stop that; stop that." "Come on, Jack," then, "Well, well, well," in an exact imitation of Mr. Wood's tone of voice. As soon as the assistant entered the room where Jack was, the talking ceased.

After listening to him a few times, Mr. Wood tried to get Jack to talk for him, but failed. After repeated failures Wood came to the conclusion that Jack's efforts at conversation were due to his being lonesome, for whenever his master puts on his hat to leave the building Jack grows very restless, and as soon as Mr. Wood leaves the room he begins to talk. One day a stranger came into the room, and to the surprise of everyone Jack yelled out, "Hello, you fool!" Asked to talk by one of the assistants who generally succeeds where Mr. Wood fails, Jack called out, "Hello, Jack, I don't want to now," and then lapsed into silence from which no amount of coaxing could draw him.

While Jack will not talk very readily for Mr. Wood, he will allow him to take more liberties with him than anyone else. Mr. Wood can put his hands on Jack without fear of being bitten, and if he puts his mouth close to the cage and talks to Jack in a low, conversing tone, the crow will lift his wings, fluttering them gently, and put his bill into his master's mustache or beard and rub it against his cheek with every appearance of intelligent affection.

Jack is very playful and loves to have things put in his cage so he can tear them to pieces. Mr. Wood frequently fills an envelope with wood chips, or anything else he has at hand, seals it up and throws it into the cage. Jack makes short shrift of the envelope and soon has its contents scattered all over the cage. He can sit on his perch and catch things thrown at him, and when suits him better than to splash about and throw water as far as he can. He is very careful of his food, though, and if it is put in his cup he does not waste it. If, however, it is thrown on the floor of the cage, Jack will waste it with great glee.

## A SCENE RARELY WITNESSED IN WASHINGTON



Snapshot of a Jolly Sleighting Party on the Avenue, Taken by a Times Photographer Last Tuesday, When the Snow Was Fresh and White.

## ELEVATOR ETIQUETTE

**D**ID you ever take notice of the way men and women act in an elevator?" asked an experienced elevator conductor in one of Washington's large office buildings.

"No? Well, you want to keep your eyes open after this, and you'll get a little fun out of it. There are two or three little things they do in elevators that tell a good deal about their character."

"Every now and then we see in the papers long discussions of a woman's rights in the business world. The writers argue one side and the other. Some say a woman ought to go ahead and take her chances along with men, and others hold that she should be given the consideration in shops and offices that she is given at home."

"I'll just tell you one thing, and that is that if the treatment accorded women by men was based on the manner in which women treat men and their sister women in elevators, the men could be called 'no gentlemen' many times."

"When a woman gets into an elevator on the first floor she takes her stand, nine times out of ten, right in front of the door. When the elevator stops at the second to let on a passenger she keeps her position, so she can be at the door when she gets to the top floor. Everybody who comes in or goes out on the way up has to crowd by her. She has got the front stand, and she is going to keep it. No matter how many have to squeeze by her, she stands her ground. A man in the same position would go to the rear of the car and stand facing the door, but the woman wants to stand in front and face wherever she pleases."

"As for telling the conductor what floor she wants, that rarely enters her head. She thinks he is a mind reader, and if he takes her by the floor she wants, she gives him the mischief. 'Men are mighty foolish, sometimes, too. A man will step into a car full of women, and it will take him several

seconds to make up his mind whether to take off his hat or not. If he gets on at the first floor and decides to keep on his hat, it is a 10 to 1 shot that when a second man gets on a floor or so up and takes off his as soon as he enters, the first man will pull his off, too. Or if he pulls it off as he comes in and sees three or four men with theirs on, he will put it back again."

"The mirror is the greatest game of all, though. I'd stand in an elevator all day long where there was a mirror and give 10 to 1 that every person who enters, man, woman, or child, will take a look at himself or herself twice while in the car. Some of them take eight or ten peeps at their personal beauty while the car is traveling two stories. Of course, there are a few who are too busy to think about it, but, as I say, a man could give 10 to 1 on every passenger and be a big winner at the end of the day."

## Got Into the Wrong Bed.

**A**N evening spent with companions in a saloon, a mistake in thinking the house of his next door neighbor was his own upon returning home, and his going to bed in the wrong house with his shoes on were the incidents which led to Thomas Devlin, a boiler-maker, being arraigned in the Hyde Park police court, Chicago, last week on a charge of disorderly conduct.

Devlin was arrested on complaint of Mrs. Alice Guinness, Ninety-third Street and Stony Island Avenue, who alleged that she found Devlin asleep with his shoes on in a bed in one of the rooms of her house.

She had never seen the man before, she said, and ran screaming to the street, where she called the policeman. Devlin was fined \$3 and costs.